adopted a National Policy on Child Labour in 1987 comprising the following action plan:-

- A legislation action plan;
- Focusing of general development programmes for benefiting children wherever possible; and
- Project-based plan of action for launching of projects for the welfare of working children in areas of high concentration of child labour.

In pursuance of the Policy, the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) scheme was initiated in 1988. The scheme was revised in 2003 with a view to eliminating child labour from hazardous occupations by the end of 10th Plan period. Accordingly, the State Governments have been requested to implement the scheme in the child labour endemic districts.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Status of PIOs *vis-a-vis* NRIs

*331. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received representations seeking clarifications on the status of Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) *vis-a-vis* Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) in domestic aviation sector;

(b) if so, what action Government have taken or proposed to take in this regard;

(c) whether according to recent amendment in Citizenship Act, 1955, notification of the Ministry of Home Affairs, FEMA and RBI Regulations, there is parity to PIOs with NRIs in respect of FDI in Air Transport Services (Domestic Airlines);

(d) if so, the reasons for creating discrimination for PIOs in aviation sector inspite of existing well-conceived policy of Government; and

(e) what steps Government have taken to clear the ambiguity on FDI in aviation sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) As per existing policy, NRIs are eligible to invest upto 100% in air transport services (Domestic Airlines) under the automatic route. However, Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) have not been able to avail this facility, as the guidelines of the Ministry of Civil Aviation stipulate that a scheduled/non-scheduled air transport operator's permit can be granted only to a citizen of India or to a company/body corporate provided, *inter-alia*, that substantial ownership and effective control is vested in Indian nationals. Parity of PIO card holders with NRIs in regard to investment in the Civil Aviation sector is under consideration of the Ministries concerned.

Telecom facilities in rural areas of Maharashtra

*332. SHRI VASANT CHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the scheme for providing telecom facilities to rural areas in Maharashtra;

(b) the total number of villages in Maharashtra where "wireless in local loop" services have been provided, so far;

(c) the number of villages where no telecom facilities exist; and

(d) the steps taken to provide telecom facilities in those villages?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) is supporting the provision of telecom facilities in rural areas of the country including the State of Maharashtra. USOF has entered into agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and private service providers for providing following facilities in the rural area of Maharashtra:

* Provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) by November, 2007 in 6,441 remaining unconnected villages. This excludes villages having less than 100 population, lying in thick forest area/naxalite infested areas etc.

* Provision of Rural Community Phones (RCPs) by September,